

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cowper.



NEAR THE EZZEKIEL GARDENS.

THE STORY OF A DIAMOND.

CHAPTER VII.—SUNDAY MORNING AT CAIRO.

I MUST pass over the period which I spent on the Nile; the wonders of Luxor and Thebes which I beheld from my position on Fadel's finger have been described by many more competent to the task. I pass, therefore, at once to the return of our party to Cairo, after a prosperous expedition.

It was in the light of a splendid sunset that we again saw the graceful citadel and piled buildings of Cairo, which, standing clear against the evening sky, in that

beauty of colouring which is peculiar to the south, made young Ellen Seymour declare that they no longer appeared to belong to earth, but seemed part of a fairy city of amethyst and pearl, with cliffs of some rose-tinted crystal, instead of stone and sand. The dark solemn groves of Lebach trees (by some wrongly called acacias) were reflected on the smooth surface of the river, and added by contrast to the effect of the bright sky.

"The scene makes me think," said Ellen to her aunt, "of the celestial city in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' with the healing trees of life and the triumphal palms growing down to the edge of the dark river."

Mrs. Seymour smiled, and acquiesced, but, like the young girl, her impressions, though good, were evanescent. Neither had really cast in their lot with the people of God; and where religious feelings are thus without root in the soul, they resemble the very hues of the bright sunset, which the travellers were admiring. The dahabeeyah glided along to the musical though monotonous chant of the boatmen, and before their "Haya leessa!" (such is their usual chorus) had ceased, the rich apricot-coloured glow had faded.

Such is the difference between the evanescent beauties of earth and the glories of Jerusalem the Golden, which fade not away. But Ellen thought not of this, though she admired the warm after-glow that still lingered on the water when the palms had lost their pink tinge, and stood sombre and purple along the dark banks. Presently afterwards the rope was thrown, and the vessel moored at Boulac.

"And now it will be dark directly; so are we to go on to the hotel, or stay another night?" said Mr. Seymour.

It was resolved to go on at once, as the next day was Sunday. Fadel was to return for that part of the baggage which could not be moved at once; and, after the usual amount of shouting for donkeys, scuffling and braying, and kicking up of dust, the party were at length mounted, and, guided by two lanterns, trotted as rapidly as possible towards the city.

Next morning the ladies stood on the hotel verandah, so well known to all Indian passengers, where gentlemen with indescribable white hats, caps, and helmets were seated smoking and reading papers. The contrast to the Nile boat scenery was great, and no less was their own appearance; the sunburned hats and well-worn umbrellas having been laid aside. Aunt and niece, in fresh muslins and parasols, were awaiting Mr. Seymour to proceed to the English service.

"I wish we could persuade our good Fadel to go to church," observed Ellen. "I am sure he knows English enough to follow very well; and he seems to me to have a great idea of what is right. He always puts on his best clothes on Sundays. How picturesque he looks now in that maroon cloth dress and yellow silk scarf. I wish he would follow us into the church."

"Ah! Miss Ellen," said her uncle, slyly coming behind her. "You want the folks to stare, do you, and say, 'See how good the young lady is; she actually brings her Mohammedan dragoman to church. How touching, how pretty he looks in his fine new clothes!'"

"Really, uncle, you are too bad—always teasing me!"

"But the notion of asking the man to go to church!" continued Mr. Seymour, laughing, as he unfurled his white umbrella. "Why, he knows English enough to serve for business, just as I know French enough to buy a new hat, or ask for all I need at a table d'hôte, but I should be puzzled if you set me to say my prayers in French, and so would he be with our English service, even if, as a good Moslem, it were not against his conscience! Come now, ladies, don't let us be late. Did not you tell us service was at eleven, Fadel?"

"Berry good sir, eleven," said Fadel, flourishing his pinchbeck watch out of his girdle; "and now 'leven hours all but fifteen minutes. But, ma'am, my watch she good for nothing: very bad for me. English gentlemen want everything quick, and poor Fadel, how he know? The gentleman's watch from England; ah! that good; ha!" and he sighed as he slipped back the watch, and meekly led the way for his employers, while Ellen whispered—

"It would be a capital thing to send him a nice watch when we go back: he deserves it."

Her aunt acquiesced readily. She had handed a half sovereign that morning to a zealous friend for the purchase of Testaments for some of the most ignorant poor people, whose case he had graphically described, and had told him she was sorry not to be able to afford more, their Nile trip proved so expensive. Yet, though Fadel received enormous wages, which amply paid and overpaid his services, and large perquisites beside, it never occurred to her that it was misplaced generosity to give him a new watch, when he had a very fair one already.

We were now skirting the Ezbekieh garden, where all sorts of gaiety were going, as it was a festival day, and there were swings, with jangling bells, stalls of sweetmeats, dancing bears and monkeys, and other diversions, which attracted crowds of all classes. Groups of dark-robed women, the poorer ones in dark blue cotton, the richer in black silk muffings, which concealed their figure and face, but allowed the gay-coloured silk dress within to be visible as they walked, were pacing in every direction. Children, from the peasant boy, in his hair-cloth garment of striped brown and white, to the merchant's son, in embroidered cloth jacket, attended by a negro slave, were seen in knots about a diminutive donkey performing tricks, or a favourite fruit-stall. It was an amusing scene, but not one suited to Sunday; and our travellers, though not as deeply pained as some would have been, made one or two remarks on the curious mode of passing the day, and some wonder was expressed that the Copts, holding the Christian faith, as they profess to do, should yet be as indifferent to the sanctity of the Lord's Day as Mohammedans, who do not know any difference between Sunday and Monday. As Fadel preceded the party, his progress was stopped in the dark archway which leads from the Ezbekieh gardens and open road into the narrow streets of the Coptic quarter, by a lady and gentleman also bound for the church, who were talking so earnestly that, at first, they did not see him. I recognised the bright face of Mrs. Rothersey and her pleasant voice as she and her husband quickened their pace a little on perceiving a party behind them.

"It does sadden one's heart, in spite of this golden sunshine and all those merry faces, to see such a Vanity Fair on the Lord's Day," the lady was saying.

"Yes, my love, but recollect it is not a bit worse here than it was in Paris when we spent a Sunday there a year ago. And how many, even in our Protestant country, are trying to sanction all sorts of public diversions and to make the Sunday of England like this."

"Still, Robert, there is a great difference; think of the quiet streets and closed shops, and multitudes going, Bible in hand, to the house of prayer, the little ones going to Sunday-school with their dear bright faces glowing over their sweet hymns," and Mrs. Rothersey's eyes filled with tears at the recollection.

"God forbid there should not be a difference, Kathleen; the salt of the earth is sprinkled in our land, else would all be corrupt," replied her husband.

"And it does seem to me that England, as a Christian country, is not doing all, or a half, or a fiftieth part of what she ought in the way of missions to other countries," continued the ardent Kathleen, warming with her subject. "Think of the passage to India, and the increasing commerce here, for instance, and how very, very little we do for God's work, while mammon has hundreds of servants at his command."

"Take care, my love: your words may be overheard; and those are the very persons whom I pleaded with this morning at the hotel with such small success. But don't despair, my dear wife; your little failure the other day at the harem showed you that too rash a zeal may

be as bad in its effects as no zeal at all. But it is easier for you to learn discretion and tact than for a cold selfish nature to gain zeal (albeit God's Spirit can change all our sinful tendencies), and don't despair, as I said before. Recollect what a special mercy has been lately vouchsafed to me in a pious and zealous young man as clerk, and assistant in my business. At any rate, you know he is already influencing some of the young men of his acquaintance to come and read in his room on Sunday afternoons."

"Yes, I like Assad very much; but he is not like his name: he is too cautious for a lion."

"In the present state of things, extreme caution is necessary; we must sow broadcast indeed, but not blow a trumpet while doing so. I fancy you will see that Assad has no lack of zeal when you know him better, and know the country and its circumstances better. But here we are at the church; just listen as we cross the court to that man haranguing his employers; it's amusing to see how they take it all in."

"Yes, ma'am," Fadel was saying, "very nice to rest one day, read good book, make prayer, very good, oh, yes. Always I make on Friday, sir, mosque, place where they pray to God, very nice; I like you, not like those silly people out there," and he solemnly rolled up his eyes, shook his head, and fingered the beads of his Mohammedan rosary. Then saluting the blind boab or doorkeeper, he took leave, and, while the travellers entered the church, repaired to a coffee-house, where the endless tale of Abu Zeid was being recited by a storyteller to a group of turbaned artisans, who were taking a rest earlier than usual, on account of the holiday. After a half hour here, he went to the shop of our old friend Ismael, which was very near, and saluted the merchant with, "Peace be to you; how is your health, and how is the trade?" To which Ismael replied, "To you be peace; it is well, thank God and the prophet, trade is not so bad," and presently, handing his amber-mouthed pipe to his friend, he signed to him to be seated, that he might tell the news of his trip. My owner related such parts as he chose, and observed, laughing, that the travellers were nice people, for they were rasheens, and sons of rasheens, by which he meant what is called in England a greenhorn, or person easily duped.

"The place was good for you, then?" said Ismael.

"By my father's beard, it was, though I took not the advantage many in my place would have done. But the gentleman gave me this ring on the New Year's feast," said Fadel, coolly showing his finger as he spoke, and winking his long cunning eye at the same time.

"Wonderful! how rich these English are!" said the old man. "It is the very sister of one I sold to merchant Hassan's agent; I believe it is really the same," he added, carefully examining me as he spoke.

"Possibly the lady sold it again; but it is not very likely, as it is but six months ago," said the dragoman.

"I sold that for fifty purses," observed Ismael.

"Then, by the prophet, this is not its sister; for it is worth seventy purses at the lowest."

"My beard is white, my son," said the old merchant, with a significant smile, and stroking his venerable appendage as he spoke. And so Fadel soon found it was no use trying to take in a man twice as experienced as himself. He concluded it were a better plan to dispose of me to some young man seeking an ornament for his bride; and with this idea he quickly wended his way to the house of a wealthy merchant, a native of Aleppo, with whose servant he had been intimate formerly, and which happened to be not far from Ismael's shop. He

had no time to lose, if he was to part with me before setting out for Syria with his employers, and there travelling about chiefly over mountainous districts and amid small villages his opportunities would be few.

Before the door of the merchant Hossein, a young negro lad was lounging on a bench in the perfect enjoyment of his favourite luxury—*i.e.*, doing nothing—and of him Fadel inquired if the master of the house were within.

"Certainly not; he has gone to a friend's house, as he always does on this day," replied the lad; "but he will return very soon, if you like to wait." So saying, he composed himself on his bench again, stretching out his long black limbs in the hot sun with intense satisfaction.

Fadel looked at his watch, but, finding he had time to spare, asked after the servant, his friend. He also was absent, but as his master would want coffee on his return, and he was the cook, it was probable he would soon be back: he was only amusing himself somewhere. While this information was delivered with a yawn by the negro, the merchant himself approached, accompanied by a friend with whom he was conversing so intently that he did not at first notice any one, and they both seated themselves on a bench in the shady part of the court. Hossein was a slender and rather tall man, about thirty years of age, with a pale and, for an Oriental, a fair complexion, and the marked and finely-cut features frequently seen in his countrymen, but with a sad and somewhat wistful expression of countenance, which exactly suited with his words as he sat down.

"It is as you say, Assad: I have been long seeking rest and finding none."

Assad was stronger and more vigorous-looking, both mentally and bodily, than his friend; the quiet determination of his grave yet pleasing countenance was a contrast to the doubtful air of Hossein; he was not so handsome, but his fine hazel eyes would have redeemed more irregular features. He wore the usual Syrian garb of wide cloth trousers, with a jacket of the same, and a silk waistcoat, but his companion had a turban and long robe, and an inner tunic of cream-coloured Aleppo silk striped with dark red. While I have been describing the two friends, they continued their conversation.

"What were the words we read this morning, my brother?" said Assad. "Said not our Lord, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'?" Said He not, 'Ye shall find rest unto your souls'?"

"Truly they are good words, sweet words," said Hossein; "as cold water on the parched tongue of a traveller those words fell on my ears to-day, and yet I feel still sad and weary: I have no peace in my soul."

"That is because you have not taken his yoke upon you, nor fully come unto him," replied Assad. "If water is in that pitcher, it will not refresh me unless I drink it. Our Lord Jesus is ready to save you if you ask him, and throw yourself at his feet."

"Oh, Assad! you are not like me, a Moslem, or you would know my difficulties," replied the other, in a low voice (for by this time they had perceived Fadel, who, however, was now engaged in helping his friend to prepare coffee over a chafing dish in a corner, and was carrying on a gossip with him). "Would you have me join a people I know not, whose ways and words are strange, whose prayers are hard for me to understand, and abandon my family and friends?"

"My brother, if God commands you to do anything, you can do it, because with the command he sends the power; but this is not now our business. I was speaking to you of rest for the soul. This is found by all who are

freely forgiven their sins; and God in his word says only through an atoning sacrifice can we be forgiven. Did you find peace when you went to Mecca two years ago?"

A deep sigh was the significant answer of the sorrowful merchant. Presently, however, he roused himself as the servant drew near with coffee, and hospitably offered it to his friend; then he added, still in an undertone, "Do not press me too far, Assad; I will think more of this, and I will continue to come to the English gentleman's house, because neither he nor you trouble me, and it is quiet and private; but I must read by myself also. I have your book, you know."

"May God by his Spirit give you understanding, light, and comfort," replied Assad; "and now I must go." So saying he rose to make the usual parting salutations, when Fadel, seizing the opportunity, ventured forward and exhibited me. An English Christian would have felt a momentary shock on seeing Hossein quietly, but with an air of interest, take me into his hand and examine me in the light and then in the shade, and enter into conversation about prices with Fadel. But Assad knew how instinctive was the transaction of such sort of business among the people of his country, as well as Egyptians; and that, even among steadfast Christians far more instructed than his friend here, it took a long time to bring them to observe the sanctity of the Lord's Day. Besides, he had forborne to press on Hossein's attention any lesser points of doctrine until he should see him grasping the Gospel truth of salvation by Christ; if (as he still hoped, though he had waited long in vain) he should one day be rejoiced by seeing such faith in him.

Meantime the merchant and Fadel had come to an agreement that the ring should be exhibited again next day, and that, if they could agree about it, a quantity of Aleppo silks should be taken as part price.

"I must take my wife a present when I return home, and that is a pretty stone," he observed to his friend, who still lingered at the door with Fadel.

"I wish my brother could bring her 'the pearl of great price,'" said Assad. "You, O Hossein, are like the merchantman seeking goodly pearls."

"The Lord is merciful, and will help me," said Hossein, with a gentle sorrowful smile, in which faint hope seemed mingling with doubts and fears. He then withdrew into the house, and Fadel, saluting the stranger, dived down a dark lane, and by short cuts managed to get back to the Coptic quarter just as the English were leaving the church.

A VISIT TO GENERAL VON MOLTKE,

CHIEF OF THE PRUSSIAN MILITARY STAFF.*

ALTHOUGH I had been preceded in my visit by some friendly letters of recommendation, yet I had hardly dared to hope that the man who was then, from his room in Berlin, occupied in directing the dismemberment (as, a short time before, the combination) of nine *corps d'armée*, would devote an hour's time to conversation with an author unknown to him. My surprise was accordingly great when, on my second application, I was at once begged to walk in by the servant, and told to enter the door on the right, through the antechamber.

The chief of the staff resides at No. 66, Behren Strasse, that oddly-built house, the construction of which

* From "Daheim," the best German illustrated periodical of the present day. Published at Leipzig, and may be had through any German bookseller in London.

has doubtless left many a passer-by in perplexity as to its destination. Bad as is the taste displayed in the buildings of this street, which nearly all date from the last century, the head-quarters of the staff may be singled out, even among these, as a remarkable instance of architectural inability. It is one of the ugliest public buildings in all Berlin, and stands in strange contrast to the important and influential character of the offices, archives, and individuals within its walls.

The first impression which General Freiherr von Moltke produces on a stranger is one of extreme sternness and gravity. His tall, erect figure seems made to command; the expression of his features is firm as iron; and one might almost fancy that time had been chiselling the lines of his face in a block of marble.

The General received me in what seemed to be his private business room, which was large, but furnished with the greatest simplicity, and the walls ornamented with engravings, for the most part portraits of the royal family, and the principal officers of the army. He was seated in an old-fashioned arm-chair, and, after he had asked me to take a seat, I ventured to broach the object of my visit. This was of so singular a nature that I think my readers owe me some gratitude for having been courageous enough to venture on it.

"Your Excellency," I said, "there can scarcely have been a journal, either German or foreign, which, during the last few months, has not contained your biography, or a fragment of it."

"And, as I am told, most defective ones," interrupted the General; "some entirely false, and others most absurd."

"Then," said I, "I may venture to hope for pardon if, in the name of my readers, I beg your Excellency to give me a few facts from your own history—facts which will be implicitly believed, and will possess a value entirely different from the colourless sketches of a biographical dictionary."

He smiled, and I then perceived that in his iron features the kindest and most friendly expression could mingle with the sternness before mentioned.

"You will be disappointed," he said, "if you think that there is anything in my life to suit the poets and lovers of brilliant scenes. My life has been so poor in events that it might almost be called monotonous; and I really do not know what the biographers can find in it except a list of dates. I assure you, I could at most find three or four episodes in my own life which could have any worth for the reading public."

"And one of these is, of course, the Bohemian campaign?"

"Yes, the Bohemian campaign is a grand, an immortal page in the world's history—an event the results of which no one, at the present hour, is capable of estimating. I did my duty at the time, in my position, just as all my comrades did theirs, but no more. The almighty power of God led the Prussian eagle forward in its victorious flight. The bravery of our army and skill of its leaders were (equally with my own plans) only the instruments of His will; and when I hear the unbounded and fulsome praise which the public lavishes on me, this thought is always uppermost in my mind: What if success, the present unexampled success, had not crowned our undertaking? Would not all these undeserved panegyrics have been transformed into so much senseless criticism and unmerited blame? Still," he continued, "I will with pleasure give you the desired facts for your journal, and you can begin by rectifying a public error about my birthplace."

"It is generally stated that I was born in Holstein,

which is incorrect. My family is an Old-Mecklenburg one. The estate of Samrow, near Pilnitz, though not entailed, remained in it for centuries, till it was inherited by my grandfather; and my father, who had served in the regiment Möllendorf, did not buy land in Holstein until after my birth. I was born 26th October, 1800, in Mecklenburg, but brought up in Holstein."

"And you passed your youth there?"

"Yes, until I was twelve years old, when I was sent with my elder brother to the military school for cadets in Copenhagen. In 1822 I entered the Prussian service, and after a strict examination was accepted as youngest second lieutenant in the 8th regiment of foot guards, then stationed at Frankfort-on-the-Oder.

"At the time I entered the military school in Berlin, my parents' property was nearly all gone, through the war and a long series of misfortunes; they could not allow me the smallest addition to my pay; and you can hardly imagine the economy I was compelled to practise. Yet I succeeded in saving enough to take lessons in modern languages. Fortunately, I soon returned to my regiment, where I was intrusted with the superintendence of the then somewhat insubordinate School of Division. Having performed this task to the satisfaction of my superiors, I was attached to a commission for topographical surveys in Silesia and the Grand Duchy of Posen, at the head of which was General von Müffling, one of those officers whom you ever after remember with unfeigned respect, if you have once had the good fortune to become intimately acquainted with them. In his disposition lay a vein of kind, gentle humour. I remember, on one occasion, one of my comrades had introduced into his plan an impossible mountain, and would not acknowledge his error when the General pointed it out, on which the latter quietly and courteously reproved him by saying, 'Well, then, I congratulate you on having enriched science, and provided the province with a new mountain.' Soon after this, fortune seemed to smile on me. I was promoted to the rank of captain, ordered to serve under the staff, and in two years, through the influence of General von Krauseneck, received an appointment in the same. Promotion in the staff was not so rapid then as now. Seven years I remained captain; but, fortunately for me, my four years' residence in Turkey occurred during that time. A journey through Roumelia, under Sultan Mahmoud, by whom I was commissioned to prepare plans of Varna, Schumla, Silistria, and other places on the Danube, was the origin of a historical work, which appeared under the title of 'The Russian-Turkish Expedition, 1828-29.' It appeared anonymously (as did all my other writings), and must have been what you would call a literary *fiasco*; for I have never heard it mentioned, except by professional men. We proceeded afterwards to the organisation of the Turkish army, in which I was assisted by four Prussian comrades—Captains Lane, Von Mühlbach, Fischer, and Von Vinke."

"Von Vinke!" I exclaimed; "the same who has been so long in the Second Chamber?"

"The same—Von Vinke-Olbendorf. Oh, what delightful recollections we both have of our stay in Turkey; and then how eagerly we five went to work! and—but you must have read of our miserable success."

"Yes, at the battle of Nisil, where the entire Kurd army (which had been powerfully recruited) dispersed, and, a few days after, the fleet deserted to the enemy. Your mission seemed then at end, Excellency, and yet you made use of your stay in Asia Minor to improve the imperfect maps of that almost entirely unexplored province."

"It will interest you to hear that for this purpose we travelled over (of course on horseback) about a thousand miles.* No European traveller had preceded me there, and even now no one can venture into these regions of the Mesopotamian desert without an armed escort. Many of the sketches I made at that time have since been rendered valuable by the comprehensive and extended learning of Professor Ritter, which has enabled him to compare them with the accounts of Alexander the Great's campaigns, the Crusades, and Marco Polo's travels. Xenophon was my latest predecessor in observations on the rise of the Euphrates among the mountain ranges of Kurdistan. Up to the time of my successful journey, every European traveller in Dschulamerik, Wan, and other places had been murdered. We sailed down the river (like Xenophon) on inflated sheepskins, and on beholding the blue sea, after a long and weary ride, broke out, as did his Greeks, in the joyful cry, *Thalassa! Thalassa!*

"I returned to Europe, rich in memories for my whole life. There I was appointed on the general command of the 4th Corps d'Armée; and when at last I reached the rank of major, determined to settle, and married Fräulein von Burt, from Holstein.

"It seemed, however, as if my stay in Prussia were never to be a lengthened one, for, so early as the year 1845, I was nominated aide-de-camp to Prince Henry of Prussia, at that time in Rome, where he had been for many years confined to a sick-bed, and was then daily expecting death. My duties for the invalid Prince left me much leisure, which I used in the study of Rome and its environs, and made some drawings, which have since been engraved as 'Contorni di Roma.'"

"What effect had the storm of 1848 on your career?"

"I was ordered to Magdeburg," replied the General, "as chief of the staff to the 4th Corps d'Armée, and remained there seven years. In 1850 I was created lieutenant-colonel; 1851, colonel; 1856, major-general; and 1859, lieutenant-general. On receiving the appointment of aide-de-camp to the Crown Prince, I joined him at Balmoral, and was present at his betrothal to the Princess Royal. After this I passed a year with his Royal Highness in Breslau, where the 11th foot regiment was stationed under his command, and accompanied him to England again on two following occasions—his marriage, and the burial of his so deeply and universally lamented father-in-law, Prince Albert."

"I do not now remember where, your Excellency, but in one of the many sketches of your life I have read that you acted as military tutor to Prince Friedrich Karl."

"That is an unimportant error," said the General, smiling. "Have you never read of my sending lumps of sand and sealing-wax to the scientific societies as meteoric stones? Nor of my fabricating spurious Runic inscriptions?"

I denied, in astonishment.

He went on: "I was told lately that a well-known journalist had indeed ascribed such childish actions to me. Is it a joke? or do they intend to make me out a clever man by such attempts to mystify men of science and worth? I will not profess to say, but this I know, that there is not one word of truth in the whole story, and that the fantastic imagination of some literary men seems to lead them to strange conclusions as to what is right and fitting."

The reader will understand why I remained silent. Probably the General read the course of my thoughts,

* The miles spoken of in this article are Prussian, equal to 4/68 English miles.

and, without waiting for answer, he went on—"As you seem to care for anecdotes, I will tell you one which throws light on an historical epoch which has only just ceased to exist. Perhaps it is scarcely generous in me to publish the weaknesses of a dead man—*de mortuis nil nisi bonum* is a just saying—but when the deceased has departed this life amid shouts of joy from millions, one feels released from such considerations."

"Of whom is your Excellency speaking?" I asked, in amazement.

"Of the high German Diet (Bundestag)," he replied, "which—but you shall hear. I was appointed chief of the general staff, and one of the most interesting duties that fell to my lot in that position was to inspect the whole of our northern coast, with the view of arranging a system of defence which might be universally applied to all the states bordering on the sea. I cannot say from what quarter the alarming storm had arisen which rendered such a measure necessary, but I was enjoined to use the utmost speed, not only by the Prussian Government, but by the Diet itself. I can assure you that I went to work vigorously, and that my plans, worked out, even to the smallest details, by officers of the marines and engineers, were laid before the high assembly with all the speed that I was capable of. I must do them the justice to say that they named a commission on the spot, to which my projects were submitted, with instructions immediately to decide on the same. And now, Herr Doctor, guess how long we waited before hearing a single word more of this 'immediate decision.'"

"Oh, your Excellency, I have already heard so much of the late Diet's snail-like movements that I can quite imagine you had long to wait; six months, perhaps?"

"Six months! Oh, that's a libel on the Diet! Three years passed before they could resolve even to begin the matter. At the end of that time the commission met at Hamburg; with them I again inspected the coast, and at last, when everything had been tried and considered, they voted, of course, as might have been foreseen, against every single Prussian proposition, and more especially against the idea of a German fleet under Prussian direction; and so everything remained in its old state."

"I believe your Excellency took no part in the Schleswig-Holstein war."

"An unimportant one, much restricted by political considerations. After the storming of Düppel, many changes were made in the army of operation in Schleswig and Jütland. I was appointed to the command of its general staff, and, in concert with the field-marshal, arranged a plan for effecting a landing on Fühnen, which was then quite practicable, but could only be carried out by aid of the Austrians, who were then lying round Kolding, while our forces were stationed in Sundewit and Jütland. To General Gablenz, therefore, was intrusted the command of a corps drawn from both armies; but, much as this command and the daring character of the expedition suited the enterprising nature of this distinguished general, the landing itself lay too little in the interest of the Vienna Cabinet for any hope of success. An attack on Alsen, therefore, and the entire occupation of Jütland, remained the only means by which we could coerce the Danish Government, seated beyond our reach in Copenhagen. You remember how Prince Friedrich Karl, who then took the chief command, effectually carried out both these operations, and put a glorious end to the war."

"And now, Excellency," I said, "my attention stretched to its utmost, 'we have arrived at the most important episode in your life.'"

"But you surely do not expect to hear from me any details of the Bohemian campaign," he answered, simply.

I was silent. I understood the answer, and yet I would have given anything just to hear what he would say of that victorious campaign.

"Yes," he went on, "it is a beautiful thing when God lights up the evening of a man's life as he has that of the King, and of many of his generals. I am sixty-six years old too, and have received as glorious a reward for my work as perhaps few men in this life. We have conducted an enterprise of immeasurable importance for Prussia, for Germany, for the world. God has graciously rewarded our honest, energetic endeavours with a glorious victory. We old people who have come out of this Bohemian war can still call ourselves the favourites of fortune, however hard the struggles of our earlier lives may have been!"

A few moments of silence followed these words, and then, in the hope of bringing back the subject of the late war, I opened my pocket-book, and recommenced the conversation by saying, "Some days ago I read, in the report of the Prussian general staff on the Italian war of 1859, drawn up by your Excellency, the following sentence, which struck me so forcibly that I noted it down;" and, without waiting for permission, I read: "We may be certain that the many weighty considerations which stood in the way of success to his plans did not escape the acute perception of the Emperor Napoleon; but he could depend on his army—he acted quickly, unexpectedly, and forcibly—a line of conduct which almost always secures the advantages missed by lingerers." "Does not this sentence, written five years ago, sound prophetic, Excellency?"

"It does indeed," he replied. "That has always been my opinion, and its worth has just been most satisfactorily tested. Next to God's help and the valour of our army, the two following considerations mainly determined the issue of the late conflict; viz., the distribution of our forces over the different theatres of the war, and their union on the battle-field. Among our enemies, clearly none was so powerful or so well-prepared as Austria. Her downfall must of itself occasion the dispersion of our other foes, who, though united in their enmity to Prussia, were divided among themselves, and had not even assembled their forces. It was a bold measure, but one which determined the issue of the whole campaign, that all our nine *corps d'armée* were at once set in motion towards the centre of the kingdom. This was only possible, because our political relations allowed us to leave the Rhine provinces undefended, save by troops improvised, as it were, which, later, formed the nucleus of the army of the Maine."

"But the transport of 235,000 men in so short a time could only be effected by using simultaneously all our lines of railway; and these reach their frontier boundaries at Zeitz, Halle, Herzberg, Görlitz, and Freiburg. Here the various earlier arrivals were compelled to await the remainder of the troops before they could form into corps. Many good judges of military affairs may have been alarmed at this dispersion of our forces over a distance of fifty miles; for an almost universal error was abroad as to our movements. That which was only the preparation for a strategical march was believed to be the march itself; and men only began to see their mistake when by forced marches the isolated corps had combined in three large bodies of troops."

"Another geographical necessity for us, perceived by very few, and by the general public not at all, was that the Austrian army in Bohemia stood as it were on our

inner line of operations, between the Mark Brandenburg and Silesia; and it being necessary that Berlin and Breslau should each be defended by an independent army, the combination of these two armies in a forward march was the only possible way by which to prevent the mischief arising from this state of things. This combination, as a glance at the map will convince you, was impossible, except in the enemy's country. In such an act lay the commencement of the war; and this was a step to which the resistance in men's minds was almost as energetic as was the eagerness on both sides to be fully prepared for its possible necessity. Men of position and weight, worthy of deference, had given their opinion that in a German war Prussia ought not to fire the first shot; but the King, after having listened to all his advisers, fortunately perceived that any longer delay would place his kingdom in certain manifest danger. He then determined on being the first to act, as Austria had been the first to arm, and by so doing dictated the entire course of the war to his opponent. I am firmly convinced that, had we delayed crossing the frontier only three days longer, we should now have to look for the battle-fields of the late war on the map of Silesia. It was a bold and fortunate stroke, and its perfect success was a happy omen for the future.

"Now, indeed, our march began in earnest, and our soldiers did their duty well; but the final combination could only be effected by dint of forcing back the foe at all points. Here, too, fortune favoured our army even beyond the King's most sanguine expectations, and in ten days we were enabled to force the Austrians to a decisive conflict. You are probably well acquainted with all the details of the battle of Königgrätz; it was the crowning point of our scheme for the whole campaign, and demonstrated its perfect working. On the morning of that day our army presented a front of four miles in length. In so extended a line we dared not await an attack, but by an aggressive onward movement we were enabled to concentrate all our divisions on the battle-field itself, and thus to convert the disadvantages of our strategical dispersion into this advantage—viz., we were enabled entirely to surround the enemy. You will find the same was the case through the whole of our march. Our position at its commencement, with three isolated corps, was by no means brilliant, but every day that passed, without hindering our advance, brought us, in all human calculation, nearer to a certain victory."

"One more question, your Excellency. Did your own steadfast confidence in the success of your plans never waver?"

"Never," he answered, firmly, "after the Saxon frontier had once been crossed—for that was, in my own mind, the basis of the entire scheme—the crossing of that frontier was for us a stern, unavoidable necessity."

"To return to your work on the war in Italy. I know what an immense sensation it created in Austria; how seldom your censures even were contradicted or contested, and how gratefully your commendations were received by those whom they concerned. The thought has struck me that the high praise which you bestowed on General Benedek in that work, may have so far contributed to heighten his popularity in the army that the Emperor had no choice but to bestow on him the highest post."

The General gave me no answer. An expression of sadness passed over his face. "A defeated commander!" he exclaimed, at last. "No civilian can have the faintest idea of what those words convey!"

"The Austrian head-quarters on the evening of Königgrätz! Ah! when I picture that scene to myself!

And such a deserving, brave, circumspect general as Benedek!"

"I heard lately," continued I, "from what seemed a reliable source, that immediately after the action at Skalitz, Benedek telegraphed to Vienna that peace should be at once concluded with Prussia. May I ask if you were acquainted with this fact?"

The General looked at me sharply for a few seconds, and then said, "The thing is possible; the Austrian commander was a very cautious man."

As I had now robbed the General of much time, I rose to go; on which he said, "Now are you going to sit down at once and write out all our chat together?"

"Yes, your Excellency; and I shall tax my memory to reproduce every word of this never-to-be-forgotten conversation."

"But how is that possible? How can you remember all the dates and particulars of my story?"

"I must try, your Excellency. It is all I can do; and, as my readers well know how difficult it must be to remember every word of so long a conversation, they will doubtless set down anything that does not please them as coming from the writer's imagination."

"Do you know," said the General, "I admire your courage in coming to me. It was right; it was paying due respect to your readers. You can write about me now *de visu*, and what you write will be no invention of your imagination. But I must say I pity you, when I think that the slightest error in your work will be judged as severely as if you had only written from hearsay. Yet, what is to be done?"

I knew not how to answer; I felt so affected by the General's kindness, and his thorough knowledge of the tender points of authorship, that I could not even find a word of thanks.

"Well," he continued, with a peculiar smile, "I will try and help you; and, as your pen will speak to thousands, tell them these were the last words the gray-haired chief of the Prussian staff said to you upon the present crisis:—'It is to be hoped that this so unprecedented and successful war will result in a blessed future for Prussia and its rising generation. During this grave time of trial, the King has proved his people, and the people have proved their King. What a feeling lies this day in the words, "I am a Prussian," for the King, as well as for his lowest subject! Our young men too have been proved; the army can now depend on them in its future struggles: the patriotism of our citizens has been proved, and the self-sacrifice of the whole nation. Prussia knows herself *now*. That is the great result of the war. Germany can speak of itself as Germany; can look forward with firm reliance; for it has seen that on the day of Königgrätz the Prussian Eagle was as young, and took his flight in the same consciousness of strength, as at Fehrbellin, Leuthen, and Belle Alliance!'"

For some time I almost despaired of success in my endeavours to give the public a true impression of this visit, in which the man had made so much stronger an impression on me than the narrative; but General von Moltke had not forgotten his promise to help me; and in a few days I received a packet containing his life, and an account of the most important points in our conversation, from his own hand.

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE "DIANA."

On the 9th May, 1866, the whaling ship "Diana," owned by Messrs. Brown and Atkinson, of Hull, and manned

by a crew of fifty men, all told, left the port of Lerwick, in the Shetland Islands, on her summer voyage. No one thought of harm to come, or looked forward to dangers exceeding those which commonly beset voyagers in the Arctic seas. With a fair wind, and with the prospect of a good fishing season, the "Diana" made her way quickly north. Melville Bay was crossed in June, and in Lancaster Sound and Pond's Bay fishing was carried on with tolerable success, till easterly winds, blowing continuously, interfered with the operations. Towards the end of August, Captain Gravill prepared to go south, and ran southward accordingly, with every prospect of getting clear, till the 3rd September, when, being in the vicinity of Clyde River, somewhat to the southward of Coutts' Inlet, it was found one morning that a solid mass of firm ice extended as far as the eye could see from the masthead, in a southerly direction, and completely crushed all hope of a passage. Thinking to find a channel in water that was deeper and more in the wash of currents setting down from the north, Captain Gravill shaped a course for Cape York, on the south-west coast of Greenland, and several degrees to the north of Clyde River, hoping, in the waters about that place, to find what he wanted. He arrived off Cape York, and, finding open water and stiff northerly winds, bore away south again.

At this time the "Diana" was in company with the "Intrepid," of Dundee, and the "Queen," of Peterhead. The last-named was a swift sailer, and was soon lost to sight, but the "Intrepid" and the "Diana" were so near together as to be able to hold communication by their boats, and to concert a plan of action by which it was hoped both ships might get away. It so happened, however, that after being in company a short time the ships were beset between two floes of solid ice, through which there were two lanes of water, a good deal choked with loose floating ice, but still apparently affording the means of escape. It was arranged that the "Intrepid" should take one channel, and the "Diana" the other, and that each ship should do its best to push through. The "Intrepid" succeeded; the "Diana" failed; and the crew of the latter ship had the mortification of seeing their consort leave them, at the same moment that they had to look forward for themselves to all the misery and privation, to say nothing of the danger, of a winter in the Arctic regions, with a short quantity of coal, provisions, and general stores.

On the 23rd September, Captain Gravill mustered all hands aft, pointed out that, now they were really hemmed in by the ice, there was no hope of being free before the spring of the following year, and proposed to go on short commons forthwith. The proposal was at once agreed to; everything eatable that any one had as a private stock was brought into the common mess, and a general overhaul of baggage was made; in order to unearth any provisions that might have been secreted. The allowance was 3 lbs. of bread, 3½ lbs. meat, and one flour day per week; the cook's savings of scraps, some potatoes forming part of the private stock of the men, and a small quantity of linseed, were extras, and were carefully hoarded. One of the survivors says: "On Monday morning, when each man got his week's allowance served out to him, I would break a biscuit in four pieces, and tie each quarter up in a corner of my handkerchief, and take one piece at each of the four meal-times; thus I had a little over about Thursday or Friday, and could then have more. Many others did the same, but some wouldn't husband theirs, and would eat as long as it lasted so that on Saturday and Sunday they had none."

Strong northerly winds prevailed. The ship, fast bound in the ice, was drifted southward along with it, sometimes at the rate of seventeen, sometimes of ten, miles a day. All October and November she drifted so, and there seemed to be no opening for her, unless it might be downwards, in which direction she might go, and leave her crew to starve upon the ice. A small seal was caught, and thankfully eaten. Off Exeter Sound, signals of distress were made, by means of burning oakum, pitch, and oil, which were hung in a brazier from the main-yard arm, but the people at the settlement did not see them, or could not attend to them in consequence of the severity of the weather.

Southward still, though slowly, the "Diana" drifted, as yet uninjured in hull and spars, though her crew were beginning to languish for want of food, and to feel sick of the anxiety which hope deferred imposed upon them. About the 3rd December, the ship was off Frobisher Straits, and the crew were hoping for a continuance of northerly winds to carry her on farther, when, to their intense grief, westerly gales sprung up, and pushed the ice, with all in or upon it, up the Straits. There she remained for a while, stuck fast, in hourly danger of being "nipped," and with every prospect, should the drifting be resumed, of being dashed to pieces against some of the islands between Frobisher and Hudson's Straits. While in this situation, she received several severe "nips," which threatened her with momentary destruction; a floe of ice firm on one side of her, and a moving floe, with enormous pushing power, on the other. The strain on the ship was frightful; every timber creaked and groaned under the pressure till it was thought they must split; the beams bent, the tanks settled together, and every part of the ship was instinct with life, borrowed for its own destruction from the enemy. She rose to the pressure, so that her keel was several feet above the level of the ice, and still the contending floes fought for her, pitting their strength against hers, and curling back from her sides, which still resisted.

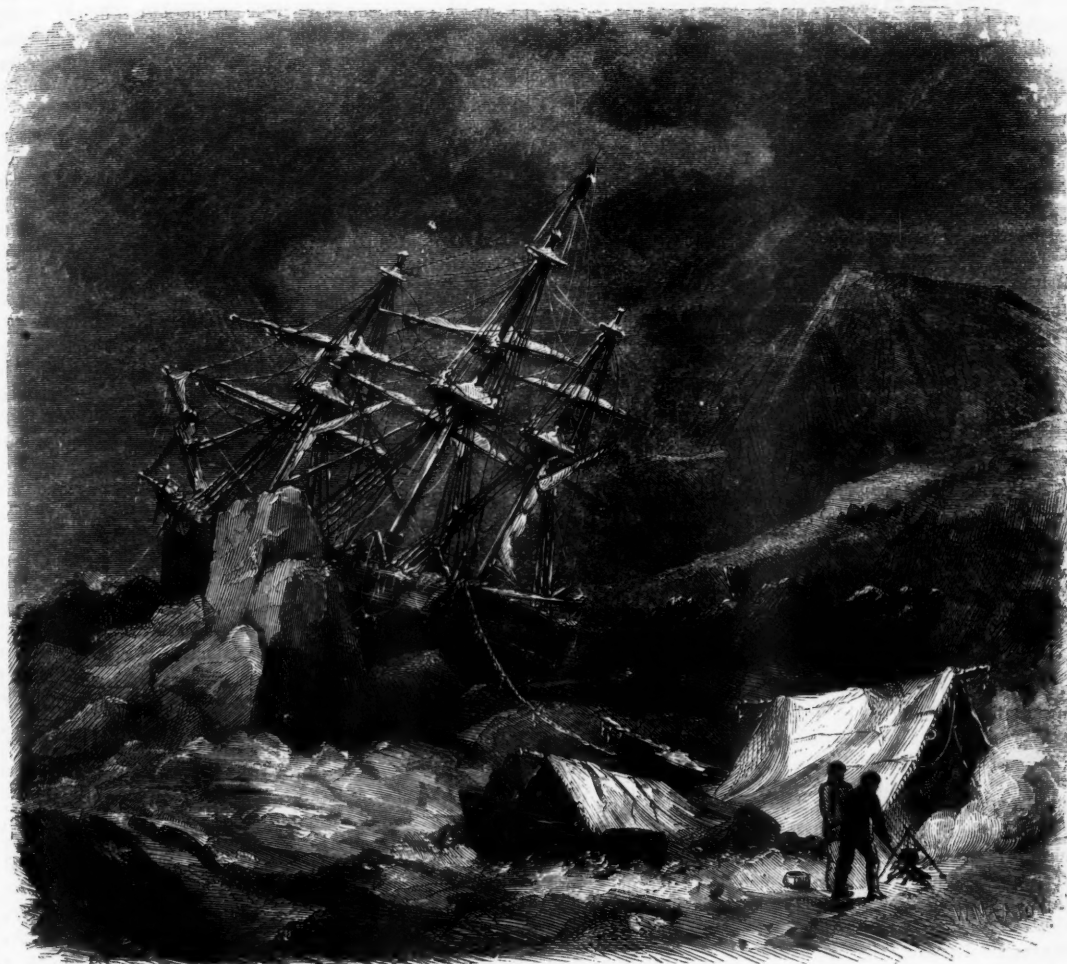
So dreadful was the noise on board that sleep was out of the question, had not the danger of sudden destruction by ice pressure banished repose from every eye. The ship sprung a leak, and the continuous exertions of all hands, night and day, could not keep her free. It was resolved to rig a tent on the ice adjoining the ship. This was done, and by means of a stove and tarpaulins, and wraps, it was hoped the place might be kept warm enough for use. Provisions, bedding, and clothes were got out and stowed in the tent. But the cold at night was so intense that Captain Gravill, who was ill, and who slept in the tent the first night it was rigged, was fain next day to go back to the ship, in spite of the crushing and the danger.

On the 26th December, at ten minutes past seven in the morning, Captain Gravill, worn out with incessant care and anxiety, died, leaving an example of unaffected piety, and quiet, Christian heroism, for his men to follow. They laid his body out and dressed it, and wrapped it in canvas, preparing also a coffin for him in case they should get clear and be able to bury him in ground. His body was laid on the port side of the bridge, ready for being dropped down into the water if the ice crushing the ship should make an opening.

All the coal and spare wood had been consumed in the autumn, when trying to steam out; fuel was growing as scarce as food. Boats, spars, fittings, and everything available that would burn was appropriated bit by bit. In January the stock of beef was exhausted; so was that of coffee and sugar; and in the beginning of

February the last of the tea was served out. Tobacco also failed. Scant was the food, scantier the fuel, and incessant the labour at the pumps. The "Diana" drifted out of Frobisher Straits on the 28th February, but got again stuck fast in Hudson's Straits, after passing great danger of destruction between the pack and Resolution

and pushed the cranky ship along. She did the eighteen hundred miles in fifteen days, and under the guidance of W. Lofley, harpooner, who navigated her, and G. Clark, who sailed her, put into Rona's Voe Harbour in the Shetland Islands on the 2nd of April, after having been given up for lost by all concerned in



IN FROBISHER STRAITS.

Island. Scurvy broke out, and dysentery; two more men died, and were placed in coffins alongside the captain on the bridge; the pumping was dreadfully hard, and the diminishing strength of the crew threatened to give up the contest with the leak.

It was Sunday evening, the 17th March, when the ice loosened its grip upon the "Diana." At eight p.m. she drove clear, and for the first time for seven months was in open water. With as hearty a cheer as famished, sickly men could give, and with deep gratitude to Him who "bloweth with his wind and the waters flow," the crew of the "Diana" prepared for the voyage home. But their sufferings were not yet at an end. As yet there had been but three deaths, but in the course of another week scurvy, dysentery, and hard work began to demand their prey. On the 29th and 31st March two of the crew died, and between the 1st and the 4th April five more succumbed.

After clearing the ice strong westerly winds prevailed

her. No one was missing. Her captain, with nine of his men dead by his side, lay on the bridge. Five men were fit for duty; and of these two were able to crawl aloft, and the remainder were lying below sick or dying. As the ship came into port another man died.

The sight which met the eyes of the people from the shore who first boarded her cannot well be told in prose. Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" might have sailed in such a ghastly ship—battered and ice-crushed, sails and cordage blown away, boats and spars cut up for fuel in the awful Arctic winter, the main-deck a charnel-house not to be described. The miserable, scurvy-stricken, dysentery-worn men who looked over her bulwarks were a spectacle, once seen, never to be forgotten. As the tidings of the ship's arrival went through Shetland, the relatives of her crew journeyed to her to meet their living and to claim their dead, and by instalments, as they were fit to be removed, the survivors were brought to Lerwick or to their homes in the island.

CATS.

BY J. K. LORD, F.Z.S.

At what date cats were domesticated and became dwellers in human habitations is a very difficult matter to decide with any approximation to certainty. One thing we may, however, make pretty sure of—their extreme usefulness as destroyers of mice and rats first led to their being turned to a practical account.

Judging from Egyptian hieroglyphics, we may assume, with a fair amount of probability, that cats were employed by the Egyptians in a state of domestication; and that these animals were highly valued by this people we may be sure, from the number of cats that are found embalmed. So valuable are cats considered to be in Abyssinia, that any dark-skinned beauty owning or having a prospective interest in a mouser is considered by fortune-hunters to be a great catch.

If you stroll through the Egyptian department of the British Museum, and carefully note some of the quaint and curious Egyptian pictures, it will be seen that cats, probably very nearly allied to our own domestic variety, are often made most conspicuous features in the drawing. And it is most remarkable that these cats are evidently trained for the especial purpose of catching birds. One painting in particular represents a bird-catching cat, which is marked with a black stripe on the heels.

Whether our domestic house-cats are really descended in a direct line from the European wild cat is a question regarding which naturalists are rather undecided. Temminck ascribes their origin to a cat which was brought from Nubia by M. Rüppell. This is doubted by other observers, Mr. Bell amongst the number. I am, however, disposed to think that the balance of evidence is unquestionably in favour of the idea that the wild cat (*Felis catus, ferus*) is the animal from whence our house-cats have sprung. It is very strange that domestication should be so conducive to the multiplication of varieties, as regards the markings of the hair. Let us briefly, as an illustration of this fact, enumerate the best known.

We have decidedly black cats, and others that are as purely white. Then we have a strange medley of colours, made up to a great extent of yellow, black, and white, commonly known as the tortoise-shell; and it is worthy of remark, that so rare is it to find a male of this particular cast, that a tortoise-shell tom-cat is said to be "worth a thousand pounds," though I suspect the fortunate finder of a male puss thus marked would be sorely puzzled to meet with any collector of curiosities who would be disposed to give five pounds for it. Yellow and white is a common form of marking. These are popularly known as "carrot cats." Then follow dun colour, or tawney, either plain or striped, the true typical tabby being distinctly and boldly striped. Bluish gray is not common; cats so coloured are esteemed rarities, and are styled "Chartreux cats."

The so-called Persian cats have very long fluffy fur, sometimes white, at others slate-colour; and the Angora cats have a yet much longer fur, which is usually of silvery whiteness and silky texture; and what is very remarkable in these cats is, that very often the ears are tufted in a similar manner to the ears of the lynx.

The Isle-of-Man cats are said to be generally deaf; and I have often heard persons in Cornwall say, "Why, you are as deaf as a Manx cat;" so that one might suppose, from the fact being to some extent proverbial, that deaf cats in the Isle of Man are of very common occurrence. There is likewise a variety of tailless cats found

in various parts of the world. This deficiency of tails I am disposed to think may be due to an accident originally; now perpetuated by interbreeding.

Cats are often, and I think somewhat unjustly, accused of a want of affection. I am sure my own cat is capable of showing great fondness for certain individuals; and she does so, too. I do not say that cats display the same attachment for their owners as dogs; pussy seldom or ever confides fully in any person, even when lavishing upon her best friend the warmest demonstrations of affection. She is extremely, perhaps stupidly, sensitive, and, being habitually fond of ease and luxury, evinces but very little anxiety, save it be for the continuance of her own enjoyments. Nevertheless, I am prepared to do battle on behalf of puss. Some people are unfairly prejudiced, because they never try to cultivate the friendship of poor despised pussy, and more frequently bestow a kick than a caress upon her unoffending person, call her treacherous, brand her with ingratitude, and stigmatize her as thief, rogue, and vagabond. And yet I maintain, despite all these unmerited accusations, a cat, if properly instructed, possesses qualities which fairly and honestly entitle her to the regard and protection of both man and woman kind. What if pussy does not merit all the eulogies bestowed upon man's most faithful friend the dog, she has, nevertheless, an affectionate and gentle nature, and seldom fails to exhibit gratitude to any one who befriends her. Show me any animal that displays in a greater degree "Heaven's last best gift," maternal affection. A cat will defend her kittens at the risk of her own life, and the fond solicitude she shows for her young is conspicuous even to a proverb. So much for pussy's virtues; next for her other qualifications.

It would not be possible to name an animal more powerfully armed for the purpose of destroying life, in proportion to its size, than is the cat. My remarks apply in particular to the common house-cat. The jaws, short and angular, are worked by powerful muscles, and, arming these jaws, are thirty-four most formidable trenchant teeth. Crafty, cunning, and mostly night-hunters, cats wage war indiscriminately upon mice, rats, and birds. In the broad daylight, too, they carry on their treacherous warfare, as London sparrows often find to their cost. Indomitable patience, and a noiseless foot-fall, give cats a terrible advantage over their prey; a victim once within range of the deadly spring is transfixed by the fish-hook-like claws, and all chance of escape is inevitably put an end to. It is impossible to picture a position of more utter helplessness than a mouse presents in the claws of a cat.

I have myself seen two cats, and I have heard of others, that had a piscatorial turn, and devoted their claws and energies in great measure to the capture of trout and young salmon. One of the cats I refer to, as being witnessed by myself, belonged to a miller. Again and again have I watched her as she waited for a fish to pass up stream; then with a sudden bound plunging her head and forelegs into the stream, she seldom failed to grip the luckless fish.

In California cats are often trained to catch a dreadfully destructive animal that infests both field and garden—one of the burrowing pouched rats called a "gopher" (*Thomomys Douglassii*). These cats are considered extremely valuable, and to possess a "gopher cat" is a piece of good fortune that does not fall to every one's lot.

The eye of the cat family (*Felidae* of zoologists) is wonderfully constructed, especially so for night prowling. The iris is capable of immense dilatation and contraction;

insomuch that, in the daytime the pupil is merely discernible as a narrow vertical slit; but at night it dilates to such a degree as to expose the whole interior of the eye. This exposure discloses a singular glistening metallic-like membrane, which gives to the eyes of cats a luminous appearance in the dark. The foot of a cat is a study in itself. I need not describe the claws of a cat, as every one must be quite familiar with the appearance of these formidable weapons—and very many have felt them into the bargain; but does every one know by what an exquisitely contrived arrangement the claws are kept from touching the ground, or becoming blunted from attrition? I trow not. To effect this purpose, the last joint, or, in more understandable words, the claw joint of each toe, is drawn by rope-like ligaments, acting directly from the penultimate joint, until it is dragged into almost a vertical position. Thus adjusted, the claw which arms it is necessarily completely retracted, within an admirable sheath, which in its turn is hidden in a thick enwrapping or armature of fur. The cat has, so to speak, no control over this action of the toes; it is entirely effected by the elasticity of the ligaments, irrespective of the will of the animal. When, however, prey is to be captured, or a wound inflicted, then the whole affair is differently managed; a set of strong muscles, called flexor-muscles, pull down the joints, and thus the formidable talons are unsheathed and ready to be buried in the flesh of an adversary. The under surface of the foot—you can see it for yourself if you look at your pussy's foot—is constructed of little ball-like pads; these act as cushions, and enable the animal to walk with a noiseless tread. In addition to the thirty-four sharp strong teeth, the cat's tongue is covered with small recurved prickles; this rasp-like tongue gives them the power to lick off the flesh, and even periosteum from the bones, as any one may observe by watching the tigers when they are fed at the Zoological Gardens.

I should require many pages of the "Leisure Hour" were I to attempt a review of the thousand and one anecdotes which are told of cats finding their way back to any place whereat they have been a long time accustomed to reside, though carried away from it shut up closely in box or basket. I am disposed to believe that most, if not all, such stories are substantially true. I once was witness to an instance of sagacity displayed by a cat, so extraordinary that I can believe almost anything that has been recorded by others.

In a small house situated on an island dwelt some friends of mine, and in that house a cat lived also. The people changed residences, and the cat was sewn up in a hamper and taken round to the other side of the island in a boat. The island was sparsely inhabited, but densely timbered, and there were but few paths cut to traverse it by; and yet the cat found its way, during the night, back again to its old residence. Now, how was this accomplished? I confess I cannot imagine; there could have been no scent of footprints that the animal could have retraced its way by; neither was there any road or path to guide it, such as it might have followed until it reached the house. We may take another example of these curious cases—one is almost disposed to say, of more than mere instinct—as being equally remarkable. The circumstance happened in Jamaica. The distance the cat was conveyed from its home was five miles, and during the whole time of its transport puss was kept sewn up closely in a bag. "Between the two places," says the writer, "there are two rivers, one of them about eighty feet broad, deep, and running strong; the other is wider

and more rapid." The cat must have swam these streams, as there were no bridges or other available means by which she could have crossed the rivers. But, despite all obstacles, she made her way back to the place from whence she had been taken.

Having thus hastily scampered over a few interesting details immediately relating to cats in a domesticated state—"tame cats," as we are wont to call them—it may be of interest to briefly consider the wild cat (*F. catus*). Whether our domestic cats are descended from this European wild cat, or whether they owe their origin to the Nubian wild cat (*F. maniculata*), are matters, as we have previously remarked, we cannot decide. Our remarks, be it understood, refer directly to the wild cat of Europe, and not to the cat family in general. The true wild cat differs in several conspicuous characters from our common house-cat. The head is altogether flatter and larger, and the wild cat has a peculiar habit of lopping the ears down on each side of the head, instead of depressing them towards the neck, as our house-cats depress or put down theirs when angered.

Let me be clearly understood, when I employ the term wild cat, to mean the cat indigenous to Europe, and not the tame cat, that may have escaped into the woods and adopted the calling of poacher and vagabond on its own account. These are often most improperly called wild cats.

The tail of the wild cat, as compared to that of the tame cat, is shorter in proportion, and the limbs are stronger and more muscular. Its colour is usually a pale yellowish gray, marked with dusky stripes. The markings upon the back run lengthwise, those on the sides in a transverse direction, but considerably curved. The tail is regularly ringed with alternate circles of dull white and brown. The lips and nose are black, and the whisker hairs are particularly long and stiff. The Zoological Society have from time to time possessed several specimens. The last of these, only recently dead, was captured somewhere in Scotland. It was not so very long ago either that wild cats were to be found in many of our English forests. The wild cat has rather an extended geographical distribution. It is found in most parts of Germany, in Russia, Hungary, and northern Asia. The female is rather less than the male. Their habits are precisely similar to those of the lynx, and several other cats belonging to the same genus.

A poacher by profession, the wild cat chooses the deep and gloomy shadows of the forest as its favourite hunting-grounds. Hid amidst the leafy branches of the trees, stealthily and noiselessly it creeps nearer and nearer to its unconscious victim, until sufficiently near to make the fatal bound; then, with unsheathed talons and gleaming eyes, it clutches with deadly grip bird, squirrel, or whatsoever else it may chance to be. Returning to its lair, it devours the dainties; morsels at leisure, and sleeps until hunger prompts it to hunt again.

Not only are birds thus eagerly sought after and destroyed, but birds' eggs are dainties the wild cat would brave anything to obtain. In the quiet hours of the night, when all honest well-behaved birds and beasts are asleep, the wild cat steals up into the trees. Creeping cautiously from branch to branch, it hunts for roosting birds or such as may be sitting upon their nests during the time of incubation. Woe be to any luckless bird the robber may chance to discover; should it succeed in making its own escape, its eggs are sure to be devoured; or, if young birds are in the nest, the banquet is only the more relished.

Pennant, in writing about the wild cat, says, "It may be called the British tiger; it is the fiercest and most destructive beast we have, making dreadful havoc amongst our poultry, lambs, and kids. It inhabits the most mountainous and wooded parts of these islands, living mostly in trees and feeding only at night. It multiplies as fast as our common cats."

Wild cats are by nature extremely fierce, and it is next to impossible ever to tame them during any term of imprisonment. Resenting every approach to familiarity, sullen, savage, and resentful, a caged wild cat seems never to tire of brooding over its woes. Few are left now-a-days in any part of the United Kingdom; rewards, traps, and watchful gamekeepers have played havoc amongst their ranks. Like the wolf, and other animals we could mention, the wild cat will soon be, if it is not already, numbered with the beasts which have been, but are not so any longer, residents in the British Isles.

The female brings forth her young either in the burrow of some larger animal, such, for instance, as a badger or fox, a cleft in the rocks, and, not unfrequently, in a deserted nest of some large bird; ravens' and crows' nests are sometimes thus appropriated. Hollow trees, too, are now and then employed as nurseries. She is fierce to a degree when she has kittens, and would not hesitate to attack a beast of any size in their defence; even against man she stands her ground, and angrily defies him. Poor puss wots not of the deadly gun, that, despite her courage, brings her to the ground quivering in the throes of death.

WIMBLEDON AND WIMBLEDON COMMON.

WIMBLEDON is a neat and cleanly-looking town of from four to five thousand inhabitants, situated in a most pleasant and picturesque part of Surrey, distant about seven miles from London, and two miles from the historical parish of Merton, where the third Henry held the famous parliament which enacted the "Statutes of Merton," the most ancient body of laws after Magna Charta. The existing town is almost entirely modern in its aspect, and, judging by its distance from the old church of St. Mary's, would seem to have gradually strayed away from its original site. This church, which was restored, and, as to its walls, rebuilt in 1843, contains some notable monuments. Among them are memorials of Cecil, Earl of Exeter, the Spencers, and the Duke of Leeds. In a chapel on the south side of the altar is the tomb of Sir Edward Cecil, who died in 1638. On the floor is a marble slab to Sir Richard Wynn, who died in 1649; he was groom of the chambers to Charles I., and accompanied him on that Quixotic journey to Spain in search of a bride. In the churchyard is the tomb of Benjamin Bond Hopkins, formerly of Wimbledon House; also that of John Hopkins, known in his day as "Vulture Hopkins," the mean miser, of whom Pope says—

"When Hopkins died, a thousand lights attend
The wretch who living saved a candle's end."

The grand attraction of Wimbledon district is Wimbledon Park, which is said to comprise twelve thousand acres, and boasts a sheet of ornamental water thirty acres in extent. These ample grounds were artistically laid out by the celebrated "Capability Brown," and are famed for their diversity of view, their picturesque character, and for their fine collection of venerable trees. The estate was given by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Christopher Hatton, who sold it to Sir Thomas Cecil, the eldest son of the Lord Treasurer Burghley. Sir Thomas

Cecil built Wimbledon House, and left the estate at his death to his third son, Sir Edward. During the Protectorate the house was purchased by Lambert, who here withdrew himself from political affairs, and cultivated the "finest tulips and gilliflowers that could be had for love or money." The estate afterwards came into the possession of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who rebuilt the house and left the property to John Spencer, ancestor of the present Earl. Sir Benjamin Bond Hopkins sold Wimbledon House to M. de Colonne, the French financier. It was burned down in 1785, and again rebuilt, after which it became the property of J. Marryat, Esq., father of the well-known Captain Marryat.

From the salubrity of its site, its picturesque neighbourhood, and its nearness to the metropolis, Wimbledon and its surrounding localities have long been a favourite place of residence. Wilberforce dwelt here during a good part of his parliamentary career, and his house, a square brick building of very modest pretensions, still stands amid a group of trees at a short distance from the London road. Not far from it is the house formerly occupied by Sir Francis Burdett. Horne Tooke, the philologist, came to this neighbourhood to recruit, and died here in 1811. Artists and literary men have resorted to Wimbledon for retirement and in search of health. Hither Douglas Jerrold was used to come when worn out with literary toil, and here Madame Goldsmith Lind resided for many years.

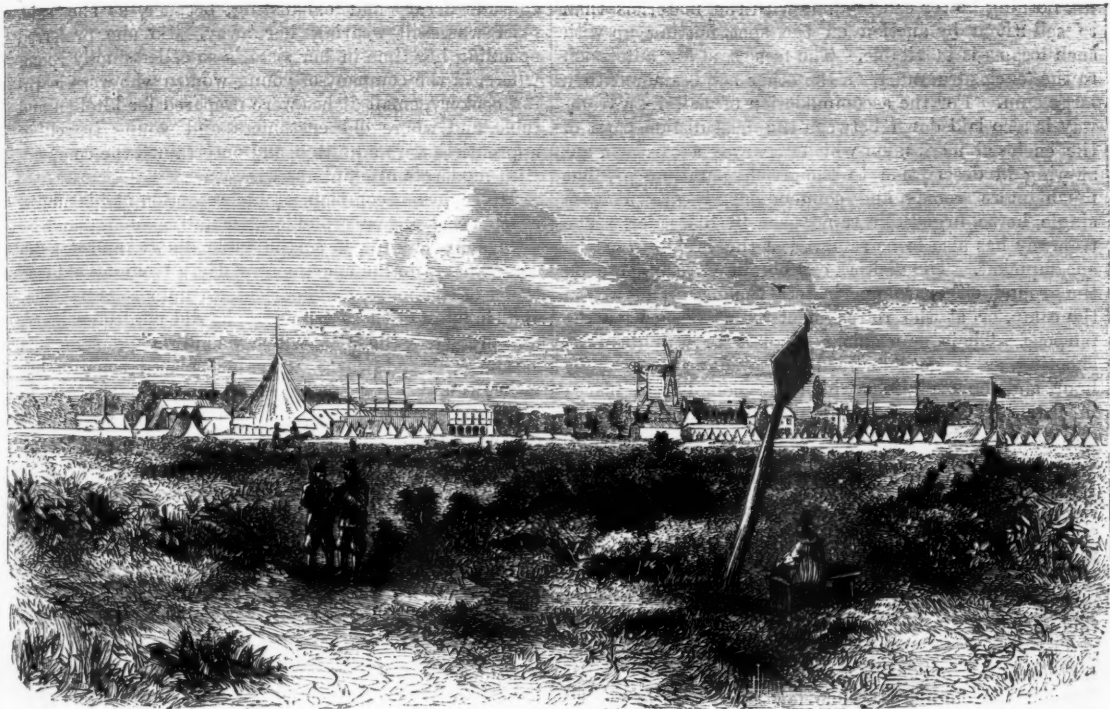
Time was when Wimbledon had an ugly reputation for the duels fought in its neighbourhood—the Common, which has since become famous for shooting of a patriotic character, being the scene of these insane and often deadly encounters. Among the most remarkable of such meetings were, the duel between the Duke of York and Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, in 1789, when neither of the combatants suffered any injury; that between Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. John Paull, in 1807, when both were wounded; that between the Marquis of Londonderry and Mr. Henry Grattan, in 1839, which proved harmless; and that between the Earl of Cardigan and Captain Henry Tuckett, in which the latter was wounded severely.

Wimbledon may be easily approached by the South-western Railway, the station of which is some half-mile from the town, and double that distance, or more, from the Common. The pleasanter approach, however, is by the London road, through Battersea, Wandsworth, and along the skirts of Putney Heath, after passing which the Common is seen stretching away to the right. A place so well suited for a battle-field could hardly be without some warlike history or tradition, and accordingly we find that about thirteen hundred years ago—that is, in the year 568—Ceaulin, King of Wessex, defeated Ethelbert, King of Kent, on the Wilbandune, or Wilban Down, which is identical with modern Wimbledon. At a later date the Romans had a camp on the Common, and archaeologists still point out the remains of an entrenchment enclosing seven acres of ground; while a stone-fenced well on the spot is yet known as the Roman Well, and relics of Roman habits and ways of life are occasionally dug up in the locality.

Like Putney Heath, Wimbledon Common is a good part scrub and furze, though there is ample room and verge enough of good level land for all the military purposes for which it has latterly been set apart. In driving along one is struck by the picturesque wooded heights which at the distance of a few miles shut in the view on the right; they are those of Richmond Park,

forming from this point of view a capital boundary to the landscape. We recollect, as we glance over the Common, that antiquarians have spoken of no less than thirty barrows as rising in different parts of it. We can detect none of them from the road, but in their

himself comfortable in camp; naturalising himself, as it were, to camp life. Therefore it is that, as far as may be, the conditions of an actual campaign are brought home to the volunteer, and he is encouraged to make the best of them, and shown how that is to be done.



DISTANT VIEW OF THE CAMP.

stead see a round number of good solid mounds of earth, evidently the work of modern engineers, and all facing one way. These are the butts for the rifleman's practice; and, though there is little or no rifle-shooting going on at this moment, we can make out one or two targets like minute white spots on the dark sides of the mounds. The most prominent structure on the Common, though it is in no way remarkable, is a single windmill, which has long succumbed to the doom awaiting all windmills, having done with its grinding for ever; its sails still stand as a sort of landmark, and when the wind blows they are seen whirling round merrily; but they do no work, all the machinery being gone, and the lower part of the mill transformed into humble tenements to the number of four. Near the mill stands Elcho Cottage, a neat little box enough, and the centre of very various hospitalities during the encampment of the volunteer host.

It is around the windmill that the tents are pitched and the encampment formed when the annual gathering of the National Rifle Association takes place, and when the best shots of England and Scotland compete for the prizes. The average range of the butts is six hundred yards, but some of them have a range of a thousand yards, at which distance the targets appear as mere specks to the rifleman. The contest for prizes, however, is not the only business of the volunteers under canvas. Quite as important as good shooting—perhaps far more important to the soldier—is the art of making

For the whole time he has no other home than his tent; and if he does not learn to cook his food, to fend himself from the weather, to keep his sleeping couch warm and dry, and to maintain a cheerful spirit under whatever circumstances may arrive—then it is very certain he does not learn the lessons which his educational campaign is intended to teach him. The life is pleasant enough so long as the weather is sunny and genial, and at such a time nothing can exceed the kindness and jollity prevailing among the men as they exchange hospitalities and courtesies, and speculate on the chances and changes of the contest as it goes on. The evenings and fine starry or moonlight nights are specially pleasant, when the gaieties of the camp, the *al fresco* repasts, the music and singing, the frolic and the fun, are prolonged hour after hour, not always within regulation time. Under a soaking rain, however, deluging the ground, making a swamp of the grassy level and a pool of the slightest hollow, and invading the sleeping quarters, the conditions are materially changed; and it is not much to be wondered at if the average temper is somewhat soured, showing that many a volunteer might confess with perfect truth that he has at bottom but small aptitude for the contingencies of a soldier's life.

The preparations which have to be made for the summer campaign are by no means trifling. In the first place, as the non-paying public is not allowed to participate in the pleasures and excitements of the spot, the

whole space occupied by the camp, and the shooting and exercise ground, has to be enclosed. This is done by erecting a solid timber fence about a dozen feet high, carried out through the entire circumference, which can be hardly less than three or four miles. The quantity of timber used must be enormous, and, as the whole has to be taken down and removed when the camp breaks up, nothing better can be done with the materials than to sell them by auction on the spot, putting up with such loss as is inevitable. The fees paid for admission to the enclosure must, on the other hand, amount to a large sum. For the accommodation of visitors, a tramway is also laid down between the most distant parts of the enclosed area, upon which tramway a carriage, answering in description to the Irish jaunting-car, but much more roomy and commodious, is drawn by a single horse, urged to a rapid pace by his rider. The tramway has also to be removed at the break-up of the encampment. The visitors can obtain refreshments on the ground, either from peripatetic vendors plying within the camp, or at the refreshment-rooms opened for the purpose. Their amusement consists in watching the shooting, as it goes forward day by day and hour by hour, and the evolutions which occasionally take place; in listening to the bands, which perform at intervals, and in observing the modes of life among the soldier class, and the many singular contrivances adopted to render it not merely tolerable, but pleasant. There is, of course, considerable rivalry as to their appointments and capabilities in this respect among the volunteer regiments from different parts of the kingdom; but there is a universal good feeling among them all, and their mutual emulation conduces to nothing so much as to their general improvement.

The town of Wimbledon, as we happen to see it, looks tame and dull enough after the stirring aspect of the London thoroughfares. The few quiet streets are all but empty, looking half-asleep under the dull gray sky; the shop-doors, as in rural villages, are nearly all shut, and there are no customers. Now and then a carriage and pair drives rapidly along towards the London road, and when the echo of the wheels has subsided a dead silence seems to succeed—silence that would be complete but for the twittering of small birds and the “caw, caw” of that solitary rook overhead, as he flaps his heavy wings in his slow and lazy flight. The only signs of business one sees are the endless forests of drying poles on the skirts of the Common, which, from their number, would seem to intimate either that the passion for clean linen is a *furor* among the Wimbledonians, or that a very considerable portion of London’s body-linen undergoes purification in the Wimbledon washing-tubs. But with the arrival of the National Rifles, and their visitors, Wimbledon wakes up, and goes to work. Her streets are crowded with strangers, her inns and lodging-houses with visitors, and her shops, it is to be hoped, with customers; while the Common is alive with the pomp of military display, and half of pleasure-seeking London rushes thither from time to time to witness and to share the excitements of the scene.

DISILLUSION;

OR, MARY OF THE MILL AND THE COUNTESS MARIA.

CHAPTER IX.

Six years had passed away since George took his betrothed by storm, and he wondered how the patriarch Jacob could have found his seven years of service short.

Six years seemed so unspeakably long to him, and yet he was so young! The years of freedom, often so much enjoyed, were to him full of painful and oppressive circumstances. He looked forward to his own fireside rather as a deliverance than a constraint. He could no longer feel at home with his mother. She had, indeed, a room to herself at the inn, but she found solitude dreary and exhausting, because, as she said, grief was still wearing her away. So she preferred spending her time in her sister’s so-called family room, where, in the company of young women who were learning cookery, small dishes were prepared for kitchen and table, and where old customers and young travelling apprentices were admitted, and entertained the company with moderate attempts at wit.

He could not complain of his reception at his aunt’s, as she was rather proud of her tall nephew; and he always had his place at the table d’hôte, and was accommodated in the apartment of Herr Kolb, an old customer of the house, and flourishing commercial traveller. But, in spite of these privileges, he did not feel at home, and preferred the attic which was always kept for him at the Mill, and where Mary had placed some of her father’s auction purchases—an old celestial globe, a compass, and two engravings—in order to give the place a learned aspect.

But even in the Mill he did not meet with such a reception as was given to his friend the young Referendary, when he visited his bride. This young man was always received with special honours, and was greeted with a festival. In the morning he went out walking or visiting with his betrothed on his arm, and in the afternoon he went out with the whole family for some pleasure expedition by land or water.

Things went on more quietly at the Mill. Long engagements are very rare in the country, and intercourse between lovers is looked upon with no favourable eyes. George could not, therefore, enjoy much more of the society of his betrothed than he had done when he was only her parent’s godchild, “George of the Firs.” On Sundays he was allowed to go to church with her, walking soberly between father and mother, and he could also take a walk with them through field and meadow. Mary’s mother would not allow them to walk out alone. “Avoid all appearance of evil, as people will talk so,” she said, to excuse herself. “You will be able to take each other’s arms long enough afterwards,” observed the miller. George and Mary had still less inclination for expeditions with Mary’s father, although the miller was sometimes ready to undertake them; for, when he occupied the place of the third person, it was difficult to know how to get on with him.

Mary herself was the sweetest refreshment of the holiday time, through the innocent sweetness of her greeting, the busy eagerness with which she attended to all his wants, and the childish joy with which she entered into all his merry student’s frolics. But she refused to listen to any of his plans for the future, although he described in glowing colours how his wife would be waiting for him at home when he returned from his nightly journeys, or how delightful it would be to drive about the country in their own chaise. But she only shook her head gently, and begged him to say no more about it. “I am afraid it will never come to pass. When I think of it, it seems as if a black stroke were drawn through it all, and I can only cry.”

The course of study had been closed by a successful examination; but the dependence on the miller, which George had felt so painfully, was not yet over.

George had taken great pains to convince his guardian

that it was perfectly necessary for him to travel, after the completion of his studies. "I cannot conceive what the good of it would be," said the miller. "It is all very well for an artisan, that is, a shoemaker or a carpenter, to travel, in order to see some new fashion, or some new method of carrying on his work, or to meet with some more suitable wood or better leather, which he may turn to account when he comes home again. But illnesses, on the other hand, are the same everywhere, and one can learn to cure them at the university first, and afterwards by experience. If, for example, a man breaks his leg in Berlin, it must be set in exactly the same way as if it had been broken in my mill; the only difference would be that one doctor or surgeon would be more skilful than another, and that would not be the result of travelling. Our old barber opposite, Manser, sets legs better than any one, even when he has had a drop too much; and he has never been out of the place."

"But the internal diseases, such as fever and the like, often appear in other places under different forms," said George, impatiently.

"That will not signify to you," said the miller; "for, supposing that a nervous fever were different in Paris from what it is here, what good will that be to you, seeing that you have to cure fevers in your own country, and not in Paris?"

But at last the miller was persuaded, and consented to allow 300 gulden (about £25) for the journey; "quite a fortune," with which he thought one might travel to the end of the world. He could never be made to understand that that sum would only suffice for two months in Vienna: he had travelled in his day, and that by no means shabbily.

After his return, George wished to try his fortune as doctor in some little town. "As soon as you can earn your own living, or, as a free man, you can lay by two hundred gulden of your income a year, she shall be yours. If a man wishes to live comfortably in his own house, he must be sure that he can maintain his wife. You will not throw away what my child brings with her, and you will be glad enough of it; but I must first know that you can support her without my help."

Mary was not like a great heiress in this matter. It did not occur to her to put a high value on herself, because she had a large dowry. George stood so high in her eyes that his love seemed most wonderful happiness, and all that she could offer appeared small in comparison with it.

The miller would have preferred that George should try his fortune as doctor in the nearest town. Family love, in the country, although perfectly devoid of sentiment, possesses something of the nature of plants; it can bear no rending asunder. From the same house where the roughest words of abuse have been heard, the most pitiful lamentation will arise when the daughter and her bridegroom settle more than six miles off.

It was, therefore, so much the more natural that the miller should wish to have his daughter near him, since she was the very light of his eyes, and the joy of his heart. He proposed to George to stay for some time in the Mill, as cases were often arising in which his assistance might be needed; and, in this way, he could gradually obtain a good practice in the neighbourhood. But George could not agree to this. He was not as exacting as that lieutenant who would only settle where his letters to his mother-in-law would cost a thaler (3s.). Yet he did not desire to live in close proximity to his future father-in-law, as he was afraid that he would then never

be free from the influence of his guardian. The miller was certainly a discreet man, and often brought forward as a dictum of his father's, that one can help people in almost everything, but as to keeping house they must be left to do that for themselves; but George still feared that he would, notwithstanding, wish to rule the young household according to his own ideas.

By the advice of his friend, who had now become an actuary, and had carried home his bride, George settled in the little town of Pulverdingen, as the prospects which the place afforded did not seem unfavourable. The head doctor was a very grand personage who refused to go out at night. The surgeon, who also practised there, was very rough—a quality which is often rather esteemed in old doctors, but is by no means to be recommended in young ones. There was also a good deal of stagnant water in the neighbourhood, which is often productive of fever; and besides this there was a Jews' village in the close vicinity of the town, and Jews are considered very desirable patients for a doctor, as they stand in great fear of death, and therefore soon call in medical aid; and they will have nothing to do with quacks, although quack doctors are often Jews.

Under these happy auspices, George took up his abode in two modest rooms in a merchant's house, and published an advertisement in the Pulverdingen newspaper, offering his services to the honourable gentry of Pulverdingen (the place did not contain any nobility).

But, alas! the public did not seem inclined to claim his estimable services. It seemed as if the public health at Pulverdingen had improved without any medical assistance, and as if the grand doctor had become sociable, and the rough one polite. No one knocked at the young doctor's door, excepting the maid, when she brought his breakfast.

He had followed the advice of his experienced friend, by placing on his bookcase a grinning skull and a pair of arm-bones, in order to give his room a medical appearance. He stayed at home all day, that he might be at hand when he was wanted; and, in order to make himself known, he went regularly every evening to the "Star," where the dignitaries of the town always took their evening glass; but all in vain! Indeed, each person who came in his way talked to him about his bodily ailments. The judge talked of his gout, the notary of his appetite, and others of various maladies. Frau Metzger, his landlady, not only regaled him with a history of all the illnesses which she had ever passed through, but also with an account of all the abnormal conditions and horrible operations which had been known among her nephews and nieces, and other members of her family; but what did it profit him to talk learnedly and sympathetically about all these cases? People listened condescendingly to all he proposed; they had tried the same remedies themselves. No one sent for him; and many candid souls assured him that it was impossible to quarrel with the head physician, even if one could believe in a young doctor. And the Jews would not trust themselves to him, in spite of all the hopes which he had built upon their fear of death. With their characteristic loyalty, they considered the physician established by authority to be the safest; and George's only patient for some months was the shopwoman of Frau Metzger, an elderly spinster, who piously used his ointment for her rheumatism, and held the honorary office of sewing the buttons on to his clothes.

George felt much oppressed by this state of things, and began secretly looking out for another home; he did not even care to pay visits to the Mill, notwithstanding his desire to see Mary. Mary never asked how he

was getting on. She had always a joyful smile or some little surprise ready for him, and consoled him for all his want of success. But the miller aggravated him beyond endurance by the oft-repeated inquiry, "How many patients have you? Are you not making any way yet?" His wife always had something comforting to say; but Christian, who had grown into a great awkward youth, always received a box on the ear from the miller, when he broke in with the following school doggerel:—

"Doctor, if you would wish to cure,
Break your own foot, and mend it sure."

George had certainly plenty of time, but he wanted some good motive for study, and he had no real delight in it. Only very few specially endowed minds can find delight and pleasure in mental labour without the inducement of a decided calling, or without any immediate object in view; and even this is not sufficient when the desire for independence and for the establishment of a home of their own is their principal incentive. Yes, he enjoyed reading his favourite poets with Mary, whose mind was so fully open to all simple beauty; but when he was alone he could take no pleasure in reading; and his room was dreary and uninteresting, with its perpetual outlook over roofs of houses. He was angry with himself for waiting so patiently; in short, he became more gloomy and less loveable every day. The miller's wife might well say to him,—

"Do thine own part, in silence wait;
God, in his time, will work his will."

But she sat peacefully at home in her mill and rejoiced in having her daughter still with her; while he, a man, in the full consciousness of his power and knowledge, had to live in idleness, pay court to miserable servants, and receive his allowance like a schoolboy; for he was not yet of age, and could not tell what the state of his own income might be.

Poetry.

"FLITTING."

THERE'S sunshine on the meadows,
And sunshine on the road,
And through the brightness toils my horse
Beneath a weary load:
And as I stand beside my gate, with hand before my eyes,
I hear the children laugh to see the household gods I prize.
There was a time when this old home
Was full of mirth and glee,
But one by one the household went
And left it all to me—
A quiet house of vacant rooms, each made a sacred place
By echo of a missing voice, or dream of vanished face.
Ah, how I used to pause before
The mirror on the stair,
And shake my long bright ringlets out,
And fancy I was fair!
I took that quaint old mirror down, and packed it up last night,
And never stopped to trick my hair—for what is left is white!
In later years I used to sit
And watch the long green lane,
For one who came in those old times
But cannot come again.
And somehow, still, at eventide my chair is turned that way;
I sit and work where once I watched—I sat so yesterday.
My new house is a pleasant place,
But yet it grieves me how
Its small completeness seems to say
My world is narrow now.
'Tis far too small for any one with festivals to keep,
But for my funeral large enough, for few will come to weep.
Good-bye, old house, a long good-bye,
My hand is on your gate;
Though tears are gathering in my eyes,
I may not longer wait.
Good-bye, old house, and after all, the love which makes you dear
Awaits me in that heavenly home which I am drawing near.

I. F.

Varieties.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS.—A return showing the number of marriages, births, and deaths registered in England during the year 1866 has been published. There were 187,519 marriages, 753,188 births, and 500,938 deaths. The excess of births over deaths was 252,250. In the year there were 16,296 more male children born than females, and the number of deaths of male persons was 12,766 in excess of the number of deaths amongst females.

HARD LINES FOR THE POSTMAN.—Travellers by steamer up the river Ottawa will have observed on the north shore of the Lake of Two Mountains a small village situate on a cliff, showing a face to the lake of bright yellow sand; and they have been told that they see an Indian village. The community here resident have just petitioned for the establishment among them of a post-office. The memorial has the signatures of Irroquois and Algonquin chiefs—Sacoatis-kurai-iarakoen-kane-gatake, Jakomisakie, L. Satexasenoten, Sosekatsien, Haienton, B. Kekatewaje, and others. It is proposed to give the village the name of Oka.—*Quebec Chronicle.*

THE MONOSCOPE.—The effect of looking with one eye on pictures, especially landscapes, is familiarly known, though the explanation requires special knowledge of optical laws. The exclusion of extraneous light is also commonly appreciated, as we may see when people peep at a picture through the narrow tube made by the loosely-clenched fist. To combine monocular vision with undisturbed light a simple mechanical contrivance has been invented by a gentleman in Scotland, to whom the readers of the "Leisure Hour" have been indebted for occasional contributions in former years. To construct the "monoscope," as he calls it, take two pieces of circular card, blackened, say four inches in diameter; in the centre of one make a square orifice one and a half inch square. From the second piece remove a quadrant or section of a fourth of the circle. By sliding one of these cards on the other, the orifice in No. 1 can be adjusted to inspect a picture of any size. Our correspondent mentions that the monoscope has been submitted to Sir David Brewster, who approves its fitness for the purpose intended.

PROTESTANTISM FOR THE TIMES.—The following sentences in an address to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury from some of his clergy, express in brief and forcible terms the principal points in which the Ritualist party are departing from the standards of the Reformation in England. "We protest against the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper being 'of a memory made a sacrifice.' We protest against its efficacy being ascribed to the sacerdotal act, instead of the faith of the partakers. We protest against the doctrine evidently intended, although obscured by a multitude of figures, that the bread and wine become the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ otherwise than sacramentally and figuratively. We protest against the assumption of regal and judicial powers on behalf of the priesthood, as distinct from the whole congregation of the faithful. These doctrines and statements, set forth by a Bishop of our church, we declare to be contrary to the plain and recognised teaching of that church; and we most solemnly, as in the sight of God, pledge ourselves to use every lawful means to prevent the introduction of them into our church, by whomsoever that introduction may be attempted. We know that we shall be accused of seeking to make divisions in the church, and of interrupting her unity; we therefore at once assert that we recognise no unity as characteristic of the church, except the unity of the Spirit, which can only exist in the bonds of Christian truth; and that we believe that the doctrines set forth in your lordship's charges are utterly incompatible with that unity."

EDINBURGH JOURNALISM.—"The Caledonian Mercury," which began in 1662, ceased on Saturday, the 20th of April, 1867.

THE SUPPLY OF COAL TO THE METROPOLIS.—The total quantity of coal now supplied to the metropolis is at the rate of 5,600,000 tons per annum, or 7 per cent. of the entire yield of the United Kingdom, of which about one half is carried by sea and the other by railway. The total sent will be—by sea, chiefly from Newcastle, 50 per cent.; from Derbyshire, 17 per cent.; Yorkshire, 10 per cent.; and the remainder is forwarded from collieries in Staffordshire, Lancashire, Wales, etc. The qualities most in request for household purposes are the Hetton, Haswell, and some of the Wallsends, and the Silkstones of the South Yorkshire district.

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